

OUTDOOR LEARNING ACTIVITY IN TEACHING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: February 2021 Revised: April 2021 Published: April 2021	<i>This study aims to find out the effectiveness of the outdoor learning method to improve students' writing skills at senior high schools. The concept of the outdoor learning method in this study adopts collaborative writing learning activities. The learning activities are carried out outside writing classes. The research method is a quantitative method with a Pre-Experimental design using pre-test and post-test design. The instrument in collecting the data uses writing tests. The researcher only used one class of ninth-graders of SMP IT HARAPAN. The sampling technique used was random cluster sampling in which the 9th-grade students as the population participated as the sample. The data were analyzed statistically using a t-test. Based on the analysis results, the average value obtained in the pre-test was 42,22, and the post-test was 76,60. Meanwhile, the score of the t-test was 37,27, and the t-table was 1,706 with a significant 5% (0.05). It means the score of the t-test was greater than the t-table. So, the alternative hypothesis (H1) was accepted, and the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected. It can be concluded that Outdoor learning activities can facilitate students to improve their writing skills.</i>
Keywords Outdoor Learning; Writing Skills; Descriptive Texts;	
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INTRODUCTION

EFL teachers apply various instructional models to improve students' writing skills. Some of them are considered successfully to enhance student's writing performance but others are not able to facilitate students to improve their writing skills. In the EFL context, writing is declared generally as a difficult skill to acquire (Irmawati, 2016; Aunurrahman et al., 2017; Bataineh et al., 2018). Writing needs linguistic aspects to be mastered and cognitive and cultural aspects (Haerazi et al., 2018). Students should be able to acquire a lot of aspects of writing, such as spelling, word choice, grammar, and proficient vocabulary (Khezrlou, 2020). In addition, students are required to have abilities to compose sentences to become a unified idea in a written text (Du & List, 2020). All learning processes of these previous studies are carried out inside writing classes. Little studies of writing are conducted in outside writing classes. Therefore, this current study aims to improve students' writing skills by applying outdoor learning activities.

The concept of outdoor learning activities is designed to teach writing skills in collaborative learning tasks. Collaborative writing is considered an effective activity to lead students to accomplish their writing tasks in outdoor classes. It is in accordance with Alshuraidah and Storch (2019), who argue that students can be asked to write texts in a group, and they can create peer-feedback activities in completing their writing products. It is relevant with the outdoor learning activities in which students are involved in writing exercises outside

the classes. Because writing skills are a very complex ability, students must be provided with writing exercises as much as possible (Listyani, 2017).

Writing is one of the very important language skills. Writing is a process of collecting information to convey information to readers. These words are arranged in a system and can be understood by their meaning. Writing is an activity in which one's thoughts, thoughts and feelings are expressed in written language. According to Widdowson (2012), making correct sentences and pouring them on paper through visual media. Therefore, writing is an activity that expresses thoughts and emotions in the form of writing and is regarded by readers as an indirect means of communication (Haerazi et al., 2020; Ruegg, 2018). In the present study, researchers try to apply outdoor learning to help students diminish their difficulties in composing paragraphs.

The problem faced by senior high school students mostly is to compose their ideas into papers to become good paragraphs. Students frequently choose unreasonable words, unstructured sentences, and no cohesion and coherence. In other words, students cannot create good words into good paragraphs (Sitorus & Sipayung, 2018). In addition, students have low vocabulary acquisition. Fortunately, vocabulary is an important part of writing (Haerazi et al., 2020). Students think English writing is difficult because they only have a minimal vocabulary. Therefore, students need proper learning activities to overcome these difficulties in writing. This study offers a solution to employing outdoor learning in writing classes. Besides, teachers may encounter some problems. The teacher does not provide students with models or media to let students know what they want to write. The teacher does not use any media to support or guide students. These problems may be caused by the fact that there is no model in the teaching process and no media is used. Therefore, students find difficulties in discovering concepts in writing and have limited time to practice writing (Setyowati et al., 2017).

Writing skills are one of the language skills that students, including high school students, should be mastered. Writing skills are of great significance for determining students' communication skills in the target language. Similarly, having good writing skills help students explore ideas and write them in grammatical order into readable text. In the teaching and learning of writing skills, this study tries to help students overcome their difficulties in completing writing tasks and producing a complete descriptive text. The outdoor learning method is considered as an effective instructional method to handle these difficulties. Therefore, this study aims to find out the effectiveness of outdoor learning methods toward students' writing skills at senior high schools.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is categorized as a quantitative method using a pre-experimental study. The pre-experimental design is chosen because this design aims to understand the effect of the applied outdoor learning method in improving students' writing skills. The text that would be written by students is a complete descriptive text. This study is conducted at the grade-9th in junior high school at SMP HARAPAN.

Research Design

In this pre-experimental design, researchers employ the experimental study using the pre-test and post-test group design. Researchers teach students in a group using the outdoor learning method. It is in line with Neuman (2015) who argues that the pre-experimental design has one group, pre-test, treatment, and post-test. This design has no control group and random assignment. A variable is one of the characteristics that can be measured and recorded on the instrument, and it changes in different values or different people's scores. There are two types of variables, independent variables (X) and dependent variables (Y). Independent variables are variables that affect other variables, and dependent variables are variables that

are affected by other variables. In the present study, the independent variable is outdoor learning and the dependent variable is writing skills. The treatment using the outdoor learning method is aimed at finding out its effect on students' writing skills.

Population and Sample

According to Hanlon and Larget (2011:7), the population is all the individuals or units of interest; typically, there is not available data for almost all individuals in a population. The population of this research is all grade 9th students of SMP HARAPAN, Bogor. It consists of 87 students, and they are divided into 3 class; which every class consists of 30 students from IX-1, 30 students from IX-2, and 27 students from IX-3. The sample is a subset of the individuals in a population. There is typically data available for individuals in samples, Hanlon and Larget (2011:7). Clearly, the sample is part of the population. Also, that means a good sample should represent the entire population as much as possible. A sample was a subgroup of the target population that the researcher plan to understand for generalizing the target population (Creswell, 2014:152). The researcher used one class as the sample of this research. To determine the sample researcher used a random cluster sample. The sample of this research was class IX-3, which consisted of 27 students in the second semester. The instrument for this data is used one question for pre-test and one question for post-test, with the same questions. The researcher also used a journal of descriptive text to give the material to students.

Data Analysis

In this research, the researcher analyzed the data of the Pre-test and Post-test statistically. The students' writing achievement in the pre-test and the post-test is calculated using statistical analysis. To find out the significant difference of both scores, researchers apply the t-test analysis. Before moving the t-test analysis, researchers have declared the students' score was valid and reliable. This study used the Smirnova-Kolomogrove formula to see the data validity and used Levene Test to see the data reliability. Meanwhile, the instrument of this study also was stated as a valid instrument. The t-test analysis was assisted by using the SPSS device.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

This study tried to find out the effectiveness of the outdoor learning method in improving students' writing skills at senior high schools. The treatment was carried out in a group, which is the 9th-grade students. At the first meeting, all 27 students received predictions to measure their descriptive writing skills. After collecting pre-test data, the researchers prepared textbooks and implemented outdoor learning for treatment to improve students' writing skills. At the last meeting, the researchers conducted a post-test. The results of these two tests are used as a reference for the researcher to analyze students' writing skills. The students' writing scores can be presented in Table 1 as follows.

Table 1
The score of Pre-test and Post-test

No	Name	Pre-test	Post-test
1	Student 1	60	80
2	Student 2	58	83
3	Student 3	50	75
4	Student 4	58	72
5	Student 5	54	75
6	Student 6	52	71
7	Student 7	55	76
8	Student 8	54	70
9	Student 9	58	80

10	Student 10	60	87
11	Student 11	40	80
12	Student 12	50	70
13	Student 13	58	75
14	Student 14	39	70
15	Student 15	48	78
16	Student 16	39	72
17	Student 17	48	75
18	Student 18	60	71
19	Student 19	40	75
20	Student 20	50	76
21	Student 21	60	82
22	Student 22	60	85
23	Student 23	62	85
24	Student 24	60	80
25	Student 25	58	75
26	Student 26	40	80
27	Student 27	39	70
Σ		1140	2068
	Mean score	42,22	76,60

The students' writing score in pre-test indicated that students have low writing skills. It happens because students still have difficulties in arranging good sentences into a good paragraph. Students have also lack of knowledge of topics that they are going to write. Therefore, students are not able to compose a complete descriptive paragraph. In addition, the generic structures of descriptive texts are not understood properly by students. Table 1 presented that students' writing score is 42,22. It is far from the passing grade of English subject at senior high schools. The category of this achievement can be presented in Table 2.

Table 2
The Experimental Class Students' Pre-test writing skill

Students' writing skill level	Total number of students	Total number of the students in percentage
Very poor	11	40,7%
Poor	16	59,3%
Enough	0	0%
Good	0	0%
Excellent	0	0%

Most students at the senior high school face difficulties writing a complete descriptive text. It happens because students do not understand the generic structure of descriptive texts. It is proven that students write an introductory paragraph of a descriptive text in the form of the body of descriptive text. In addition, students still have lack of knowledge of the topics provided. Students are also lack vocabulary acquisition. The data of Table 2 showed that in the experimental class consist of 27 students. Students were in very poor level (40,7%) and students that poor level (59,3%).

Table 3
The Experimental Class Students' Post-test writing skill

Students' writing skill level	Total number of students	Total number of the students in percentage
Very poor	0	0%
Poor	4	14,8%
Enough	18	66,6%
Good	5	18,6%
Excellent	0	0

As can be seen from the above table, the experimental class consists of 27 students. Students are at a low level (14.8%), students are at a sufficient level (66.6%), students at an intermediate level (18.6%), and there are no students at a very poor level or excellent level.

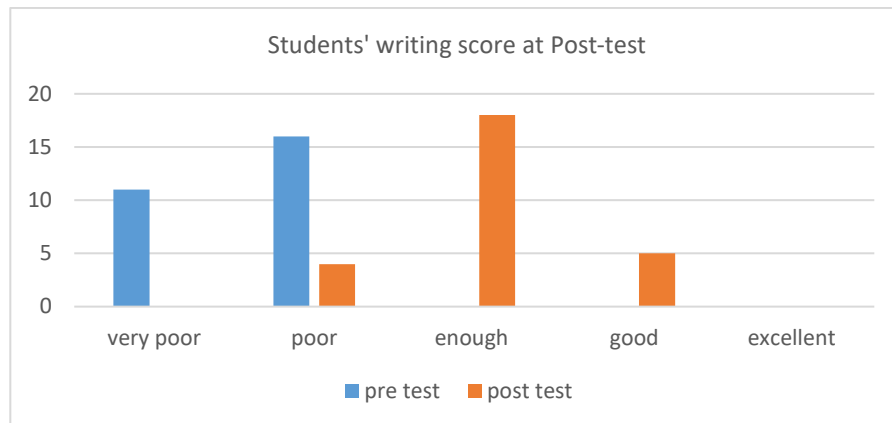


Figure 1. Students' Writing Scores

Use t-test to analyze studentss score data to determine whether there is a significant difference between students' writing skills before and after giving treatments.

Table 4
Pre-test and post-test scores analysis

No	Pre-test X_i	Post-test X_j	$X_j - X_i$	\bar{D}	$((X_j - X_i) - \bar{D})$	$((X_j - X_i) - \bar{D})^2$
1	60	80	20	24,9	-4,9	24,01
2	58	83	25	24,9	0,1	0,01
3	50	75	25	24,9	0,1	0,01
4	58	72	14	24,9	-10,9	118,81
5	54	75	21	24,9	-3,9	15,21
6	52	71	19	24,9	-5,9	34,81
7	55	76	21	24,9	-3,9	15,21
8	54	70	16	24,9	-8,9	79,21
9	58	80	22	24,9	-2,9	8,41
10	60	87	27	24,9	2,1	4,41
11	40	80	40	24,9	15,1	228,01
12	50	70	20	24,9	-4,9	24,01
13	58	75	17	24,9	-7,9	62,41
14	39	70	31	24,9	6,1	37,21
15	48	78	30	24,9	5,1	26,01
16	39	72	40	24,9	15,1	228,01
17	48	75	27	24,9	2,1	4,41
18	60	71	11	24,9	-13,9	193,21
19	40	75	35	24,9	10,1	102,01
20	50	76	26	24,9	1,1	1,21
21	60	82	22	24,9	-2,9	8,41
22	60	85	25	24,9	0,1	0,01
23	62	85	23	24,9	-1,9	3,61
24	60	80	20	24,9	-4,9	24,01
25	58	75	17	24,9	-7,9	62,41
26	40	80	40	24,9	15,1	228,01
27	39	70	31	24,9	6,1	37,21
jml	1140	2068	674	24,9	-7,3	1570,27
Mean	42,22	76,60	24,9	24,9	0,27	58,15

Based on Table 4, the researchers analyzed the results to use outdoor learning to discover students' writing skills in descriptive text. The researchers calculated the following steps according to the t-test formula. The above calculation shows that the output of t_0 is 37,27, and the watchband freedom (df) 26 is 1,706. The average value is less than 0.05, and $T_{\text{calculation}} > T_{\text{table}}$. This means that outdoor learning activities can effectively improve students' writing skills.

Discussion

The current study is focused on investigating the effectiveness of the outdoor learning method in improving students' writing skills to produce descriptive texts at senior high schools. The outdoor learning method is chosen to help students to practice writing because it seems its learning activities refer to collaborative learning. The practice of writing activities carried out with involvement of two or more students in producing descriptive texts. It is in line with Storch (2020) who argues that collaborative writing can be carried out in any workplace, including outdoor classes to practice writing because writing activities often accomplished in teams rather than individually. In this study, students are asked to produce a complete descriptive text. In the learning activities, they discuss and practice to write an introductory paragraph of descriptive texts. It aims to provide students with writing exercises in order they are able to reflect their language use ability.

The outdoor learning activities to practice writing facilitate students to analyze any sentences produced. Teachers provide them with various exercises. It is in line with the principles of collaborative writing workings in which students are prepared with a multitude of roles and exercises (Storch, 2011; Ismiati & Pebriantika, 2020). During the outdoor learning activities, students are divided into some small groups between 2-3 members of each group. They decide by themselves the writing topics that they want to create a complete descriptive text. The problems faced by them are how to express their ideas to papers. To help students, teachers encourage them to understand first what they want to write. In doing so, students create drafts in sentences. The discussion process in this situation is essential because it can motivate them to think critically. It is in accordance with Wiyanto and Asmorobangun (2020) who inform that discussing the topic before writing is important to construct ideas going to write.

Before applying the outdoor learning activities, the teaching materials, learning media, and methods provided by teachers are monotonous and limited in scope. As a result, the students cannot develop their writing skill optimally. Based on the effective method for teaching writing theory, it is known that effective method to teach writing should give qualified and understandable input in the pre-writing stage (Fernando-dobao, 2020). In this current study, the learning activities give the effects on spoken and written communication in real practices.

The effectiveness of outdoor learning activities can be proven with students' writing achievement. After giving treatments using this method, the students' writing skills are improved. It means there is a positive effect. The scores of students who took outdoor learning activities after treatment were higher than those before treatment. It can be seen from the students' test scores (76,60) that this is higher than their test scores (42,22). The significance score of the student's writing test results is higher than 0.05, indicating that the outdoor learning activity has a significant effect on improving the writing of the 9th grade students of SMP IT HARAPAN.

Outdoor learning activities are a method adopted by the teacher. The teacher invites students to study outside the classroom to watch events or describe something directly in the field as a learning resource. The role of the teacher here is to inspire, which means that the teacher is a guide so that students can gain experience from it. Through the teaching methods of outdoor learning activities, you can understand the impact on students' writing ability and

how they use their thoughts and ideas to write. According to Vera (2012), the method of teaching outside the classroom is to try to get close to real learning resources such as nature and society. Therefore, the current study shows that outdoor learning activities are able to help students improve their writing performances in producing descriptive texts.

CONCLUSION

The use of the outdoor learning activities to teach students' descriptive writing skills can improve students' writing skills. The students in practicing writing are provided with various materials and topics to produce writing exercises. In addition, this study provided students with vocabulary lists to help them create a complete descriptive text. It can be seen from the process of students improving the decals. The students progress can be seen from the student's predicted and post-test results, the student's predicted results (42, 22) and the student's test results (76, 60). This means that students' sense of accomplishment has been improved, and their post-test scores are higher than their pre-test scores. It also shows that when the significance is 5%, the value of the $t_{cal}(37,27)$ is higher than that of the $t_{table}(1,706)$. Based on the research findings, the present study can be concluded that the use of outdoor learning activities has a positive effect on students' writing skills at senior high schools. EFL teachers can apply this method if they have the same instructional goals and objectives. Other researchers can utilize the theoretical basis for further studies in developing students' writing skills and conducting other studies focusing on non-linguistic aspects, such as students' motivation level, metacognition level, and linguistic awareness.

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